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Learn English > English lessons and exercises > English test #89555: Adverbs and past tenseWhich adverbs take the Present Simple (Preterite) vs the Present Perfect?PRESENT PERFECT AND ADVERBS Use the present perfect :- With adverbs expressing a temporal link with the present:Now, by now, so far, since/for, over the past ...ex: He has been here since this morning. - With adverbs expressing a consequence in the present:Always, never, ever, before, already, yet, still, just, recently, it's the first time.ex: Have you ever been to Australia? It has just happened. PRETERITE AND ADVERBSUse the preterite :- With expressions that take place in the past:Once, ago, when, in those days, last week, on Monday, etc.ex: It happened a long time ago. - With terms that describe a sequence of past actions:First, then, later, next ...ex: He looked at her and then laughed. Put the verb in parentheses in the correct form : preterite or present perfect! Note the correct placement of the adverb when it is in parentheses. Twitter ShareEnglish exercise "Adverbs and past tense" created by anonyme with The test builder Click here to see the current stats of this English test Please log in to save your progress.End of the free exercise to learn English: Adverbs and past tenseA free English exercise to learn English.Other English exercises on the same topics : Adverbs | Past | All our lessons and exercises

When we make a sentence in the simple past we often use an adverbial to say when the event happened: Sentence Adverbial I went to Madrid yesterday last week last month, etc. recently If we want to say how much time has passed since the event happened we use AGO 2 days ago 2 weeks ago 5 years ago a long time ago We can say how long the event lasted with FOR for 2 weeks for 5 months Three men died and went to heaven. The first went up to St. Peter who said, "I have only one question before you go into heaven: Were you faithful to your wife?" The man answered, "Yes, I never even looked at another woman." St.Peter said, "See that Rolls-Royce over there? That's your car to drive while you're in heaven." St Peter asked the second man the same question, and he answered, "I once made love to another woman at the office party, but I confessed to my wife and she forgave me and it was OK." St. Peter said, "That new Peugeot over there, that's your car to use in heaven." The third man answered the same question, "I am very sorry but, I chased every girl I saw, and I was with a lot of different women." St. Peter said, "OK, but when you were alive you were a good person, you gave money to the poor and you did many good things, so that old Seat 600 over there is yours to use while you're in heaven. The three men entered heaven and went separate ways. A few weeks later, man #2 and man #3 were driving along when they saw man #3's Rolls Royce parked outside of a bar. They stopped and went into the bar and found man #1 with empty bottles all around him, he looked very unhappy. They went up to him and man#2 said, "What's the matter, what could possibly be so bad, you're in heaven, you drive a Rolls Royce, and everything is wonderful!" He said, "I saw my wife today!" The other two answered, "That's very good! What's the problem?" He answered, "She didn't have a car, she had a skateboard!" Are you looking to enhance your English grammar skills? One crucial aspect to master is the use of adverbs of time. These little words hold significant importance in the English language, as they provide context and precision when talking about when something happened or will happen. In this text, we will investigate into the world of adverbs of time in English grammar, exploring their different types, examples, and the role they play in making your communication more engaging and interesting.

Adverbs of time play multiple roles in English grammar. Firstly, they provide exactness by offering specific details about when an action takes place, allowing the reader or listener to have a clear understanding of the timeline involved. Also, certain adverbs of time can place emphasis on a specific part of the sentence, highlighting the importance of the time aspect. Also, including adverbs of time in your writing or speech adds variety and helps to avoid monotony, making your communication more engaging and interesting. Finally, these adverbs help improve the flow of your writing by providing transitional links between sentences or events, creating smoother connections and better organization. So, let's jump into the world of adverbs of time and unlock their power in English grammar. Adverbs of time play a crucial role in enhancing the meaning of sentences and providing context related to time. There are various types of adverbs of time, including definite time adverbs, indefinite time adverbs, frequency adverbs, and duration adverbs. Adverbs of time can be placed at the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence, depending on the desired emphasis and effect. Adverbs of time are important for conveying the temporal aspects of actions and events in the past, present, and future. Using adverbs of time in sentences can add precision, variety, and clarity to your communication. Adverbs of time are used to indicate when an action happened, when it will happen, or how often it occurs. Adverbs of time play a crucial role in enhancing the meaning of sentences and providing context related to time. By using these adverbs, you can make your sentences more precise and convey more information using fewer words. In this section, we will explore the definition of adverbs of time, the different types of adverbs of time, and the placement of these adverbs in sentences. Adverbs of time are time adverbs or expressions used to talk about when something happened, when something will happen, or the frequency of an action. They provide specific details about the timing of an action, allowing the reader or listener to have a clear understanding of the timeline involved. Examples of adverbs of time include: Yesterday Today Tomorrow Sometimes Often Rarely Daily Weekly Annually There are various types of adverbs of time, each providing unique information about the timing of an action or event. Familiarizing yourself with these types will help you understand and use them effectively. Some common types of adverbs of time include: Definite time adverbs: These adverbs specify a particular point in time. Examples include yesterday, today, tomorrow. Indefinite time adverbs: These adverbs give a general idea of when something happens without specifying the exact time. Examples include sometimes, often, rarely. Frequency adverbs: These adverbs describe how often something happens. Examples include daily, weekly, annually. Duration adverbs: These adverbs indicate the length or duration of an action or event. Examples include briefly, forever, temporarily. Adverbs of time are usually placed at the beginning or end of a sentence, but they can also be positioned between the subject and the verb. The placement of these adverbs depends on the emphasis you want to give to the time aspect of the sentence. For example: Beginning of the sentence: Yesterday, I went to my aunt's house. Between subject and verb: He still is completing his assignments. End of the sentence: She cleans her house daily. READ: Mastering Simple Present Tense: Rules, Examples, and Usage By using adverbs of time in different positions, you can create varying effects and highlight the time aspect of your sentence. Understanding the definition, types, and placement of adverbs of time will allow you to effectively use them in your writing or speech. These adverbs provide specific details, add variety and emphasis, and improve the flow of your sentences. Experiment with different adverbs of time to enhance your communication skills and make your messages more engaging and informative. Remember, accurate use of adverbs of time is essential for precise and effective communication. With practice, you can master the art of incorporating these adverbs seamlessly into your sentences. Adverbs of time play a crucial role in English grammar by providing information about when something happened, when something will happen, or how often something occurs. To help you understand how these adverbs are used in context, here are some common examples: Yesterday: You can use "yesterday" to describe an action or event that occurred on the previous day. For example, "I went to the museum yesterday." Today: This adverb indicates the current day. For instance, "I am going to a concert today." Tomorrow: Use "tomorrow" to refer to an action or event that will take place on the following day. For example, "I have a meeting tomorrow morning." Sometimes: This adverb is used to describe actions or events that occur occasionally, but not regularly. For instance, "I sometimes go for a jog in the evening." Often: Use "often" to indicate that something happens frequently. For example, "I often eat breakfast at a café." Rarely: This adverb suggests that something happens infrequently or hardly ever. For instance, "She rarely watches movies." Daily: Use "daily" to describe actions or events that occur every day. For example, "He reads the newspaper daily." Weekly: This adverb indicates that something happens once a week. For instance, "We have our team meetings weekly." Annually: Use "annually" to describe actions or events that occur once a year. For example, "The company holds its annual conference in June." These are just a few examples of common adverbs of time in English grammar. By incorporating these adverbs into your sentences, you can provide clarity and precision about when an action or event takes place or how often it occurs. In English grammar, adverbs of time play a crucial role in providing information about when an action or event took place. When it comes to the past tense, using the right adverbs of time can bring clarity and precision to your statements. Let's explore the different types of adverbs of time used with various past tenses. In the simple past tense, adverbs of time help to indicate when an action occurred in the past. Here are some common adverbs of time used with the simple past tense: Yesterday Last week/month/year In 1999 A while ago Earlier For example: I went to the beach yesterday. She visited her parents last week. The past continuous tense is used to describe ongoing actions that were happening in the past. Adverbs of time can be used to provide additional information about when these actions took place. Here are some examples: While When At that time All day/night For example: She was studying when I called her. They were playing soccer all day. When we talk about an action that happened before another action in the past, we use the past perfect tense. Adverbs of time can be used to indicate when the first action occurred. Here are some examples: Before Already Just By the time For example: They had already left when I arrived. She had finished cooking before the guests arrived. READ: Adverbs of Place: Definition, Examples, and Advanced Usage Guide The past perfect continuous tense is used to describe a continuous action that started in the past and continued up until another point in the past. Adverbs of time can be used to provide further details about the duration of the action. Here are some examples: For example: He had been studying for three hours before he took a break. They had been waiting since morning. Adverbs of time help us convey the temporal aspects of actions and events in the past. By incorporating these adverbs into your sentences, you can enhance your communication and provide a clear timeframe for your statements. Remember to choose the appropriate adverb of time based on the specific past tense you are using. In English grammar, adverbs of time play a crucial role in providing information about when an action or event takes place. They help us to understand when something happened, when something will happen, or how often something occurs. Adverbs of time can be used with different tenses, including the present tense. Let's explore how adverbs of time are used in different present tenses. In the simple present tense, we use adverbs of time to talk about habitual actions or general truths. These adverbs indicate when something regularly or repeatedly happens. Some common adverbs of time used in the simple present tense include: Always: He always takes the bus to work. Frequently: They frequently go hiking on weekends. Rarely: She rarely eats fast food. Never: We never miss our morning coffee. The present continuous tense is used to describe actions that are happening at the moment of speaking or in progress. Adverbs of time can enhance our understanding of when these actions are taking place. Here are some adverbs of time that are commonly used with the present continuous tense: Now: I am studying for my exam now. Soon: They are leaving for vacation soon. Recently: She has been working on the project recently. Tomorrow: We are meeting for lunch tomorrow. The present perfect tense is used to talk about actions or events that started in the past but have a connection to the present. Adverbs of time provide clarity about when these actions or events occurred. Here are some commonly used adverbs of time with the present perfect tense: Just now: I have finished my assignment just now. Already: They have already seen the movie. Yet: She hasn't finished her report yet. For: We have been friends for many years. Since: He has been working here since last year. Lately: I have been reading a lot lately. The present perfect continuous tense is used to describe actions that started in the past, continue in the present, and may continue in the future. Adverbs of time can help us understand the duration or frequency of these ongoing actions. Here are some adverbs of time commonly used with the present perfect continuous tense: Recently: I have been practicing the piano a lot recently. Always: They have been talking about their vacation plans always. Suddenly: He has been feeling better suddenly. Continuously: We have been working on this project continuously. Using adverbs of time in the present tense can provide clarity and precision in communicating when an action or event takes place or how often it occurs. Whether it's the simple present, present continuous, present perfect, or present perfect continuous tense, incorporating adverbs of time helps convey a clear timeframe for statements. In English grammar, adverbs of time play a crucial role in providing information about when an action or event will take place. When it comes to future tense, using the appropriate adverbs of time can help convey clarity and precision. In this section, we will explore the different adverbs of time used in the future tense. READ: Distributive Adjectives in English: Usage and Examples When using the simple future tense, we can use adverbs of time to talk about events or actions that will occur in the future. These adverbs provide a specific time frame or point in the future. Here are some examples of adverbs of time commonly used with the simple future tense: Tomorrow Soon Later Next week On [specific date] In [specific time period] For instance, you can say: "I will meet you tomorrow." "They will arrive soon." "She will finish her project later." In the future continuous tense, we use adverbs of time to indicate ongoing actions or events that will be happening at a specific time in the future. Here are some examples of adverbs of time used with the future continuous tense: At [specific time] By [specific time] Throughout [specific time period] For example: "They will be studying at 7 PM tomorrow." "He will have been working for six hours by the time you arrive." "We will be celebrating throughout the weekend." The future perfect tense is used to talk about actions or events that will be completed before a certain point in the future. Adverbs of time can help specify the timing of such events. Some examples of adverbs of time used with the future perfect tense are: By [specific time] Before [specific time] When [specific event occurs] For instance: "She will have finished her assignment by 5 PM." "They will have left before we arrive." "He will have found a solution when the meeting starts." Finally, the future perfect continuous tense is used to describe ongoing actions that will have been happening up until a certain point in the future. Adverbs of time provide clarity about the duration or timeframe of these actions. Here are some examples of adverbs of time used with the future perfect continuous tense: For [specific duration of time] Throughout [specific time period] Until [specific time or event] For example: "She will have been studying for four hours by the time the exam starts." "They will have been traveling throughout the summer." "He will have been working until midnight." Using adverbs of time in the future tense allows us to specify when an action will take place or for how long it will occur. By incorporating these adverbs into our sentences, we can provide clear and precise information about future events. By understanding and incorporating adverbs of time into your English grammar, you can enhance the clarity and precision of your sentences. Throughout this article, we have explored the importance of adverbs of time in different present and future tenses. In the present tense, we have seen examples of common adverbs of time that can help specify when an action or event is happening. These adverbs allow you to provide more context and accuracy in your communication. Moving on to the future tense, we have examined how adverbs of time can be used in various future tenses, including the simple future, future continuous, future perfect, and future perfect continuous. By using adverbs of time in these tenses, you can convey the exact timing or duration of an action or event that will occur in the future. Incorporating adverbs of time into your sentences not only helps you express yourself more effectively but also enables your listeners or readers to understand your message with greater clarity. So, remember to use adverbs of time appropriately in your English grammar to convey the desired temporal information accurately. 0 ratings0% found this document useful (0 votes)287 views The document discusses expressions that are used to show past time when using the simple past tense in English. It lists eight common time adverbials used to indicate when a past action occurred...SaveSave Simple Past Tense Adverbials For Later0% found this document useful, undefined Infinitive Past Past Participle Cast Cast Flee Fleed Fleed Foretell Foretold Foretell Kneel Kneelt Kneelt Sought Sought Strive Strive Thrust Thrust Tread Trod Trodden Stride Stride Stridden Slay Slew Slain The present perfect continuous tense is commonly used with the time expressions since and for. It has been raining since yesterday. I have been working in this company for 3 years. My sister has been preparing for the civil services exam for six months. Simple past tense The simple past tense is commonly used with time expressions referring to the past. Examples are: yesterday, last year, ago, in 2006 etc. My father came here yesterday. I saw him last week. His father died two years ago. The adverbs never, always, seldom, often, frequently, occasionally, once, twice, thrice etc., can also be used with the simple past tense. He never invited me to his parties. I met him once. She seldom stepped out of her home. She frequently changed jobs. Past continuous tense The past continuous tense is used to talk about actions and situations that were in progress at a particular point of time in the past. When we use the past continuous tense we usually also state when that particular activity was in progress. For this purpose, we use a time expression or a time clause. The children were doing their homework when their dad returned home from work. The light went off when I was reading. The past perfect tense The past perfect tense is not normally used alone. It is used to denote the earlier of two past actions. We use the simple past tense for the latter action. He had finished his studies before he joined the army. They had signed the agreement before I knew about it. Time expressions and adverbs that are used with the simple past tense The Simple Past Tense is used to describe completed actions or events that happened in the past. It is often used with time expressions like yesterday, last week, in 2020, an hour ago, etc.A day/week/month/year agoAt the beginning of the yearIn 1990 (or any past year)On Monday (or any past day)At 5 PM (or any past time)This morning (if the morning is over)Every day/week/month (in the past) I saw my friend yesterday. We watched a movie last night. She traveled to Italy last summer. I called you a few minutes ago. He left the office an hour ago. They got married two years ago. I met my old teacher the other day. I spoke to the manager earlier today. At that time, we didn't know what would happen.At the beginning of the year I had a resolution at the beginning of the year. My parents moved here in 1990. I had an important meeting on Monday. The train arrived at 5 PM. People used to write letters in the past. I played outside a lot in my childhood. When I was young, I loved riding my bike. Before I moved to New York, I lived in Boston. We first met a long time ago. We didn't have smartphones back then. I worked at that company from 2010 to 2015. Once upon a time, there was a brave knight.Simple Past Tense - Example Sentences –The most common time adverbs are words that indicate a particular moment in the past, present and future. These adverbs include:nowtodayyesterdaytomorrowtonightlast monthlaterWe normally put these adverbs at the end of the phrase, though it is possible to put them at the beginning. Here are some examples:I'm busy now. I'll call you later.Can the doctor see me today?Where were you yesterday? I didn't see you.We're playing basketball tomorrow.He's coming home tonight.The orders went very well last month.Adverbs that Show FrequencyTo express how often something happens we can use adverbs of frequency, such as:alwaysoftenfrequentlyusuallynormallysometimesoccasionallyrarelyneverAdverbs of frequency usually go between the subject (the person) and the verb (the action). For example:I'm fed up! You always arrive late!We often watch television in the evenings.My parents frequently call on Sundays.As children we usually went to bed at 9pm.The boss normally starts work before everyone else.I sometimes do aerobics at the gym.The last editor occasionally made typing mistakes.They rarely listen to music.He never gets up early.The exception for the position of adverbs of frequency is the verb 'to be'. In this case the adverb of frequency comes after the verb. For example:It's often cold here during the winter.He's usually very reliable.We can also use other adverbs to express frequency, such as:hourlydailyweeklymonthlyquarterlyannuallyThese adverbs go at the end of the phrase. Here are some examples:The radio broadcasts the news hourly.When he was at university, he phoned his parents daily.We do our main food shopping weekly.They release a new edition of the magazine monthly.The board of directors meet up quarterly.I earn about £20,000 annually.Adverbs for a Length of TimeWhen we want to describe how long something has happened or will happen, we can use these adverbs:We use 'for' with a period of time, which could be in the present, past or future. While we use 'since' with a fixed point in the past, so it's only used with the present perfect simple and continuous. For example:We're staying here for three nights.She'll be away for ten days.They lived in France for nine months.I've worked here for two years.She's been the manager since 2012.We've known them since last year.He's been playing tennis since he was a child.Adverbs with a Time RelationshipThere are other adverbs we can use to express if and when something has happened in relation to now. These adverbs include:yesterdaybeforeafterlatelatelyrecentlysoonerpreviouslyearlierMost of these adverbs usually go at the end of a phrase, with the exception of 'already' and 'still' that go between the subject and the verb, or after the auxiliary/modal verb if there is one. Here are some examples:Have you finished yet?I've already eaten.I dropped my phone but it still works!Where's Suzanne? I saw her before.We got there at 4pm and they arrived ten minutes after.Things have been really busy lately!Have you seen any good films recently?See you soon!Now you work here, but what did you do previously?Are you hungry? No, I went to the canteen earlier.As you can see, these adverbs of time are really important for your communication. So start practicing now by using them as much as you can in conversation and writing in the next few days. Making some of your own examples is also a great way to consolidate what you have learned. The past simple tense (also called the simple past tense, or simply the past simple) is used to express completed actions. We often use the past simple with an adverb or adverbial phrase that specifies a time from the past, such as yesterday, last year, an hour ago, etc.This tense is known as the past simple because, like the present simple tense, it does not require any auxiliary verbs to complete its meaning; its structure is simply the subject + the past tense form of the verb."I went to the park."The speaker's action of going to the park has been completed. The verb go is therefore put in the simple past tense, went.However, we do not know anything about when the action was completed. We often add adverbs or adverbial phrases that provide additional information about past time, which can be placed at the beginning or end of the sentence. If appearing at the beginning of the sentence, these adverbs are often set apart by commas (although this is not necessary if the information is only one or two words). However, this information can't come between the subject and the verb, and it usually does not come between the verb and any information that is necessary to complete the verb's meaning (such as its direct object or an adverbial complement). For example:In more stylized writing, however, adverbials relating to time will sometimes come between a verb and its complement, which gives them extra emphasis in the sentence. For example:"I wrote over an hour ago to my sister, but have yet to hear a reply."Notice that the tone becomes much more formal and the sentence sounds a bit more convoluted. In most cases, it is best to avoid this structure.The types of past simple tense sentences we've looked at so far have all been examples of positive sentences, also known as affirmative sentences. These tell the reader what did happen. We can also create negative, interrogative, and negative interrogative sentences in the past simple tense; however, the structure of the sentence changes slightly in each case.In contrast to positive sentences, negative sentences in past simple tense tell the reader what did not happen. To form negative sentences in the past simple tense, we must use the auxiliary verb did (the past tense of do) together with not before the main verb of the sentence. The main verb, meanwhile, goes back to present simple tense, which is the infinitive form of the verb without to. For example:"I did not eat the cookie." "She didn't enjoy the movie." "He didn't have to leave so early." Like negative sentences, we have to use the auxiliary verb did to make interrogative sentences (sentences that ask questions) in the past simple tense. In this case, however, did comes before the subject, rather than the verb. We can see this construction more clearly if we compare affirmative vs. interrogative constructions:Affirmative: "I went to the park." Interrogative: "Did you go to the park?" Affirmative: "Janet saw a great movie on Friday." Interrogative: "Did Janet see a movie on Friday?" Affirmative: "They mowed the lawn already." Interrogative: "Did they mow the lawn yet?" We can also use question words (such as who/whom, what, where, etc.) before did if we are asking for specific information. For example: "Who/whom did you see?" "What did you wear last night?" "When did they arrive?" Additionally, we can use who without the auxiliary did in interrogative sentences in the past simple tense. In this case, it is functioning as an interrogative pronoun and acts as the subject of the sentence. Because we no longer need did to complete the sentence's meaning, we use the past tense of the main verb once again. "Who went to the movie with you?" "Who left their wallet behind?" Negative interrogative sentences also ask a question, but they imply that the speaker expects the answer to be (or believes the answer should be) "yes." We form these by adding the auxiliary verb did before the subject of the sentence and the word not after the subject. Did and not are very often contracted, in which case didn't comes before the subject: "Didn't you go to Europe last year?" "Did Jessie not try the cake we baked for her?" "Did I not tell you to clean your room an hour ago?" "Didn't he say he was leaving in the morning?" The types of sentences we've covered above are the most common uses of the past simple tense. However, there are a couple of other ways we can use the past simple to express specific meanings. There is another way that we can form a positive sentence in the past simple tense. It is known as the past emphatic tense, and it is formed by using did before the main verb, which is in present tense. It is the same construction as negative sentences in the past simple tense, except that we leave out the word not.This form places special emphasis on the fact that something happened in the past, which is usually used as a means of explanation or to convince someone of something. For example: "But I'm telling you, I did clean my room when you asked me to!" "John was in a sorry state last night. I suppose he did have a lot to drink." We can hear the emphasis that is placed on the word did in these sentences if we read them aloud, and it is this stress that creates the explanatory intonation in the text.If we are expressing a wish or desire, we usually use the past tense; for a present wish, we use the past simple. "I wish it weren't/wasn't Monday." "I wish I didn't have to go to work." This is an example of what's called the subjunctive mood in English, which is used for expressing things that are hypothetical or not objectively factual. To learn more about how the past simple tense is used in this way, see the section on subjunctive mood under the chapter on Mood. Get all volumes of The Farlex Grammar Book in paperback or eBook. Share Tweet An old married couple noticed that their memory was not as good as before. They started to forget many things. They were worried that this could be dangerous, because one of them could accidentally forget to turn off the cooker and cause a fire. So, they decided to visit their doctor to get some help. Their doctor told them that many people their age write little notes to remind themselves. The old couple thought this was a very good idea, and they left the doctor's office very pleased with the advice. When they got home, the wife said, "Darling, will you please go to the kitchen and get me a dish of ice cream? And why don't you write that down so you won't forget?" "Nonsense," said the husband, "I can remember a dish of ice cream!" "Well," said the wife, "I'd also like some strawberries on it. You'd better write that down, because I know you will forget." "Don't be silly," replied the husband. "A dish of ice cream and some strawberries. I can remember that!" "OK, dear, but I'd like you to put some whipped cream on top. Now you'd really better write it down now. You'll forget," said the wife. "Come on, my memory's not all that bad," said the husband. "No problem, a dish of ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream." With that, the husband went into the kitchen and shut the door behind him. The wife could hear him getting out pots and pans, and making some noise inconsistent with his preparing a dish of ice cream, strawberries, and whipped cream. He came out of the kitchen about 15 minutes later. He walked over to his wife to his wife, he gave her a plate of bacon and eggs. The wife took one look at the plate, then she looked up at her husband and said, "Hey, where's the toast?" Question word Auxiliary Subject Verb (infinitive) Adverbio When Why How Where etc. did I you he she it we you they John go to the beach yesterday? Subject Verb (past form) Adverbial I you he she it we you they John went to the beach yesterday. English tenses are used with adverbs and adverbial phrases that indicate the time of the action, for example, yesterday, now, often, tomorrow, an hour ago, last week. Adverbs of time and adverbial phrases of time are often called "time expressions". Certain adverbs of time and adverbial phrases of time require certain tenses. For example, if you say yesterday or last week, you will use the past tense, not the present, right? The connection between the tense and its adverbs and adverbial phrases of time is something that can't be ignored. In fact, understanding this connection is the key to correct use of English tenses. Examples: I have just seen him. I saw him a minute ago. Maybe I have just seen him" happened earlier than "I saw him a minute ago". We use the present perfect in the first sentence, and use the simple past in the second sentence because just and a minute ago show the necessity to use these tenses. So, there is a clear connection between the tense and its adverbs of time and adverbial phrases of time. This connection will help us to understand how English tenses are used. Examples: usually: simple present + now: present continuous + already: present perfect + for three hours, already: present perfect continuous + yesterday: simple past Not all adverbs and adverbial phrases of time call for certain tenses. For example, the adverb soon. You can say: He left soon. He will leave soon. The adverb soon doesn't call for a specific tense and doesn't help us to choose the tense correctly. Native speakers sometimes omit expressions indicating time (if the context is clear) because the tense form itself conveys general information about the time of the action. For example, the sentences in the following pairs have practically the same meaning; I buy bread in this store. (usually) I usually buy bread in this store. She's watching TV. (now) She's watching TV now. He has left. (already) He has already left. However, language learners can't allow themselves such familiarity with tenses. You need to establish a clear connection between the tense and its adverbs of time. Always analyze why this or that adverb of time is used in the sentence and in what meaning, and what adverb of time you should put in if it is not there. This will help you to understand what English tenses mean and how they work, and you will quickly learn how to use them correctly and confidently. Good knowledge of various expressions denoting time is necessary for understanding and using English tenses.